

Appendix 3. **Glossary of Archival Terms**
(http://aabc.bc.ca/aabc/msa/1_getting_started.htm)

Accession: 1. The act of transferring legal and physical control of records and papers to the archives or records centre. 2. The materials which have been transferred to the archives.

Accession record: An administrative and descriptive document identifying the contents, provenance, and disposition of material brought into the archives.

Acquisition: The act of obtaining records for the archives, through donations, transfers, loans, or purchase.

Administrative value: The usefulness of the records to the creating office for the conduct of its day-to-day business.

Appraisal: 1. The act of determining the worth of records and papers to either the creator or the archives based on primary values, such as their administrative, legal, or financial usefulness, or secondary values, such as their historical, informational, evidential, and research values. 2. The monetary evaluation of historical materials.

Architectural record: A plan, drawing, blueprint, or other graphic or visual document used in the design and construction of buildings, grounds, landscapes, or other manmade objects.

Archival value: The permanent and continuing worth of records based on their administrative, legal, financial, or historical usefulness.

Archives: 1. The noncurrent records of an individual, organization, or institution kept for their continuing value. 2. The agency or institution responsible for the care of archival materials. 3. The building or other repository housing archival records. Private papers are also referred to as manuscripts.

Archivist: The person responsible for caring for historical materials in the archives, including acquisition, appraisal, accessioning, arrangement, description, conservation, reference services, and public relations activities.

Arrangement: The act and result of physically organizing records in accordance with archival principles such as provenance and original order. The process includes sorting, packing in file folders and boxes, labelling, and shelving.

Artifact: A physical object produced, shaped, or adapted by human workmanship.

Artificial collection: A body of archival material deliberately brought together for some reason other than in the process of daily activities. Some collections are based on subject content, geographical information, or type of record.

Calendar: A chronological listing of individual documents, identifying writer, recipient, date, place, and summary of content. Calendars are rarely produced and are not recommended archival practice.

Cartographic record: A graphic record depicting a linear surface. Two types of cartographic records discussed in this book are maps and plans.

Catalogue: 1. To organize information about records according to a specific classification system, such as subject, author, date, or place. 2. A group of cards, papers, or other media organized according to a specific classification system.

Conservation: The physical care and maintenance of archival materials, including cleaning, storage, and repair.

Deaccession: To remove material permanently from the physical control and ownership of the archives.

Deacidification: The process of neutralizing acid in documents or other objects, raising their pH value to a minimum of 7.0 to help preserve them.

Description: The act of establishing intellectual control over records by identifying their contents, important subjects, and historical significance. Records are described in finding aids.

Donation: A permanent gift to the archives from an individual or organization.

Encapsulation: The act of enclosing a document in sheets of mylar plastic to protect it from damage and dirt. The document does not adhere to the plastic and can be removed at any time.

Ephemera: Miscellaneous printed and published materials, such as advertisements, posters, broadsides, cards, and brochures, created for short-term use but historically valuable as illustrations of past events or activities.

Evidential value: The worth of the records in providing adequate and authentic documentation of the organization and activities of an agency.

File: 1. To place records in a predetermined location according to a specific classification scheme. 2. A group of records organized and kept in a predetermined physical order in a folder.

Finding aid: Any descriptive item, created by the archives or the creating agency, that identifies the scope, contents, and significance of records. Basic finding aids include guides, inventories, card catalogues, indexes, and lists.

Fiscal value: The usefulness of records for financial purposes, such as to confirm monies paid, taxes owing, monetary worth, or outstanding debts.

Fonds: A French term for the records or papers of a particular individual, institution, or organization. Referred to in this manual as record groups and manuscript groups.

Form: Any document created to obtain or organize information, containing spaces for inserting information, descriptions, or references.

Fumigation: The process of exposing records to a gas or vapor which destroys insects, mould, mildew, fungus, or other harmful forms of life.

Guide: A finding aid that describes the holdings of the repository and their relationship to each other. Guides may describe the entire holdings of the archives or focus on particular subjects, times, or places.

Hygrometer: An instrument which measures relative humidity.

Index: 1. To list names, subjects, or other information alphabetically. 2. A finding aid in paper, card, or other form which contains alphabetically organized information about holdings in the archives, based on subject, author, chronological, or geographical categories.

Informational value: The usefulness of records based on the information they contain about the creating agency or other people, subject, places, times, or events and activities.

Inventory: A finding aid that describes the organization and activities of the agency that created the records and the physical extent, chronological scope, and subject content of the records. In addition to this information, an inventory may include lists of box or file titles or other descriptive information.

Item: The smallest unit of archival material, such as the individual letter, report, photograph, or reel of film.

Legal value: The worth of records for legal purposes, such as to prove ownership, custody, or legal rights and responsibilities.

List: A finding aid containing information such as file or box titles, names, places, or subject information in alphabetical, chronological or other order and including the physical location of the records enumerated.

Location file: A finding aid which identifies the physical location of records in the archives.

Machine- readable record: Records created or stored on media such as magnetic diskettes, tapes, or cards and retrievable by machines such as computers or word processors.

Main entry: A library term referring to the complete catalogue record of an item, presented in the form by which the item is to be identified in any other references. It is the main or central identification.

Manuscripts: Unpublished handwritten or typed documents. In archives, manuscripts are usually defined as the personal papers of individuals or private groups as opposed to the records of a business, government, or other institution.

Map: A representation of all or part of the surface of the earth (or other planet or body) identifying its geographical, political, or physical features.

Oral history: The aural record or written transcript of a planned and recorded oral interview.

Original order: The order and organization in which records were created and/or stored by the creator or office of origin.

Papers: Personal or private materials, as distinct from records. Also called manuscripts.

ph value: A measure of the level of acid in paper or other materials. The value is measured on a scale from 0 to 14: 7.0 is the neutral point, values above 7.0 are alkaline, and values below 7.0 are acidic.

Plan: A drawing or sketch of any surface showing the relative positions of various objects, parts of a building, landscape, or other physical features.

Processing: The work involved in arranging records to make them available for use, including sorting, packing, labelling, and shelving.

Provenance: The office of origin, or person or agency that created or collected records in the course of their activities. This definition differs from the museum definition of provenance, which refers to the successive ownership or possession of an item, not its creation.

Record group: A body of organizationally related records created or collected by the same individual or agency as part of its functions and activities.

Records: 1. Recorded information, regardless of physical format or characteristics. 2. Documents or other material created by business or government agencies in the course of their daily activities.

Records centre: A facility separated either physically or administratively from the archives, used to store and provide reference service for semi-active and inactive records of the creating agency pending the ultimate disposition of the material.

Records management: The act of controlling the creation, use, and disposition of records created by an office or agency. Records management helps to improve economy and efficiency in the office, ensure the regular transfer of valuable records to a records centre, and control the regular disposal of records no longer worth keeping.

Records schedule: A document identifying the types of records created by an office or agency and governing their retention and disposition.

Repository: A place where archival materials are housed.

Respect des fonds: Respect for the creator or office of origin. Referred to in this manual as provenance.

Separation sheet: A form identifying archival material that has been removed from a larger body of records for various reasons, including storage, conservation, or disposition.

Series: Records or groups of records arranged in accordance with a particular filing system or maintained as a unit because of their relationship to one another. Series may be organized by original order, subject, function, or type of material.

Sound recording: Aural information stored on discs, magnetic tape, cylinders, or other media.

Subgroup: A body of related material within a record group, usually composed of the records of a subordinate administrative unit.

Subseries: A group of related material within a series, usually identified by subject, type of material, function, or filing arrangement.

Textual record: Written documents, either handwritten or typed, on a paper base.

Transfer: The administrative and physical movement of records from one agency or place to another, usually from the creating body to the archives.

Visual record: Material composed of images rather than words. may include photographs, films, and paintings.